

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

MINUTES

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON BAY-DELTA

January 24, 2012

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. in Committee Room 2-456 at Metropolitan's Headquarters.

Members present: Chair Peterson, Vice Chair Gray, Directors Hawkins and Steiner.

Members absent: Directors Brick, Camacho, De Jesus, Fleming, and K. Murray.

Other Board Members present: Board Chairman Foley, Directors Barbre, Dick, Heidel, Lewinger, Little, Millard, Morris, Record, and Wilson.

Staff present: Arakawa, Bennion, Breaux, Burman, L. Carrillo, J. Green, Hom, Kightlinger, T. Lee, Man, Neudeck, Patterson, Philp, Riss, R. Ryan, Schlotterbeck, Scully, Upadhyay, Waade, R. Winn, and Zinke.

1. OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE ON MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMITTEE'S JURISDICTION

None

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON BAY-DELTA HELD SEPTEMBER 27 AND DECEMBER 13, 2011

Due to the lack of a quorum, the minutes were not approved.

3. COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REPORT

No report was provided by the Committee Chair.

4. COMMITTEE ITEMS

9-1 Review of Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Plan and Draft Environmental Impact Report

Ms. Brenda Burman, Special Projects Manager, Bay-Delta Initiatives, provided an update including information about the release date of the draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), the review/comment period, and the seven statewide public hearings. She reviewed key concerns that Metropolitan and other agencies have about the draft Delta Plan and the EIR, explained how the EIR will be reviewed, and described the Delta Stewardship Council's scheduled plan for further releases in the next several months.

The Committee commented on some of the Council's recommendations regarding regulating local water supply. It was noted that the water comes through the Delta, not from the Delta.

5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

a. Presentation on Public Policy Institute's Report: Transitions for the Delta Economy

Mr. Roger Patterson, Assistant General Manager, Strategic Water Initiatives, introduced guest speaker Ellen Hanak, Senior Policy Fellow, Public Policy Institute of California, and noted that she is one of the principal authors of the subject report.

Ms. Hanak explained that in the research that was conducted, they looked at a range of physical changes and management decisions that will shape the Delta. She noted that the changes are mainly going to affect the interior Delta. She discussed how new conveyance, sea level rise, and potential island flooding may impact salinity in the Delta; the potential impacts on the Delta economy by mid-century; and four policy recommendations.

There was a question from the Committee regarding the assumptions about salinity based on the amount of water that is exported from the Delta. Ms. Hanak explained the salinity modeling analyses being conducted. There was also a discussion about the value of Delta agriculture and water-based recreation.

b. Update on Bay-Delta Conservation Program

Mr. Steve Arakawa, Manager, Bay-Delta Initiatives, explained the schedule for the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) as agreed upon in the BDCP Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). He discussed the public meetings that are held each month, the workgroup meetings, and gave upcoming meeting dates for both. Mr. Arakawa also updated the Committee on the status of executing the BDCP MOA and Funding Agreements.

General Manager Jeff Kightlinger briefly discussed the public comment process, and noted that an administrative draft BDCP EIR/Environmental Impact Statement is expected by the end of February 2012.

c. Bay-Delta Manager's Report

Mr. Patterson noted that on Friday January 13, 2012, Governor Jerry Brown and U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Salazar jointly committed to continue pursuing a solution for the Delta, specifically to have a draft BDCP proposal for habitat restoration, water conveyance, and other key BDCP elements released by July 2012. He reported the number of agencies that have executed the BDCP MOA and Supplemental Funding Agreements.

Mr. Patterson announced that Delta farmer and engineer Alex Hildebrand, representing the South Delta Water Agency, passed away on Monday, January 23, 2012.

There was a question from the Committee regarding what happens if other agencies do not sign the BDCP Supplemental Funding Agreement, and it was noted that the other agencies would have to pick up that percentage of the cost. It was also pointed out that the agencies that make up most of the cost allocation are expected to execute the agreement.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

Meeting adjourned at 2 p.m.

Glen Peterson
Chair